

FINAL MEETING SUMMARY

HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE *November 5, 2003 Portland, Oregon*

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This is only a summary of issues and actions in this meeting. It may not represent the fullness of ideas discussed or opinions given, and should not be used as a substitute for actual public involvement or public comment on any particular topic unless specifically identified as such.

Welcome and Introductions

Susan Hughes, vice chair, led the meeting. The September meeting summary was adopted.

Hanford Advisory Board (HAB) Informational Forum Overview

Bill Kinsella briefly reviewed the agenda and expectations for the public forum on Thursday evening at Lewis and Clark College. As host, Bill will give the welcome and introductions. Ken Niles will talk about what Hanford is and how it affects Oregon, and Susan Leckband will speak regarding environmental problems at Hanford. The presentations will take about 45 minutes, then the floor will be opened for discussion. A list of organizations and interest groups and the people associated with them will be available at the forum.

Committee Discussion

- Dennis Faulk asked Bill to ask students to stay through the whole forum as, in the past at similar forums, there has been a mass exodus in the middle of the presentations.

Risk Based End States

Yvonne Sherman, Department of Energy-Richland Office (DOE-RL) discussed the upcoming Risk-Based End States (RBES) regional public meetings. The format will be slightly different from a standard DOE public meeting. There will be a presentation of what the RBES document is and does and what suggestions and responses are being sought from the public. Then the group will break out to view 3 stations around the room: 100/300 Area, 200 Area tanks, and ground water in general. The groups will get 45 to 60 minutes total to look at all 3 stations. . A scribe will take comments to be consolidated and added to the variance document. After the breakout, the attendees will regroup to discuss what they heard at the stations and provide any further comments. This is not a TPA or NEPA meeting, so the committee is hopeful this format will encourage dialogue.

Committee Discussion

- Dennis Faulk asked if DOE is envisioning a formal comment period, in addition to the comments being taken by the scribes at the stations. Yvonne confirmed that they have discussed a mailbox and/or email box specifically for additional comments.
- Dennis wanted to know how the meetings are being announced. Yvonne replied that, to start, announcements will go out to the HAB.
- Greg deBruler asked if they would be issuing newspaper ads, too. Yvonne responded that she is not enthusiastic about the effectiveness of newspaper ads. Since Columbia Riverkeeper will be holding other informational meetings, they may be doing DOE's advertising for them in Hood River. Greg will let Yvonne know if DOE should advertise or not.
- Greg asked, if the document is ready for comment and the final draft is due by January 31st, then when will the public outreach, take place. He does not believe there is time to address all items as they are defined. Mike Thompson, DOE-RL, replied that Greg is correct, there is no way to cover all items by the end of January. They will have to be addressed by documentation and processes that will probably be years in the making. What Mike hopes to do is put RBES in a general overall framework. The document that Mike is required to produce looks at the past decisions and the land use planning documents to see if different decisions would have been made. Greg would like to see some discussion with DOE-HQ about addressing these public involvement topics. Greg's concern is that if these issues are not addressed with clarity and focus, nothing will be accomplished and there will not be a process in place to deal with it. Dennis Faulk responded that he knows part of the problem is depth and breadth, but the agencies are hoping to have deeper discussion at the meetings. Susan Hughes asked Greg if he is proposing the committee make some kind of formal action, but he did not put forth a specific proposal.

- Leon Swenson asked if Mike has had any conversations with DOE-HQ regarding what they have found so far. Mike has not been in touch with DOE-HQ as of now.
- Mike Thompson agreed that he could provide a roadmap and timeline to the final Records of Decision in the final document and include with that the process for public involvement.

State of the Site Meetings

Mary Ann Wuennecke, Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology), presented a proposal to combine the State of the Site public meetings with the budget public meetings in March. .

Committee Discussion

- The Committee agreed that combining the meetings could work. Jim Trombold suggested the meeting time be moved to 6 PM to enhance participation. Others agreed.
- Dennis stated they are envisioning a meeting with pictures and a discussion of the site, then they will mention the details on how much and where dollars are spent and allocated. . Susan Leckband's main concern is making sure the audience understands what they are hearing. She worries the budget details will get lost in the larger site discussions. Amber confirmed the general idea is for presenters to work the budget information into their presentations.
- Mary Ann would like committee members to send her suggestions regarding where the meetings should take place. They are considering using the same format: first, a brief by the agencies, then public perspectives, and then a public comment period.

Public Involvement Dialogue

The committee discussed the Public Involvement Dialogue at the September HAB meeting.

Committee Discussion

- Jim Trombold thought the presentation went well, but he was disappointed with the agency response.
- Dennis commented he has seen a change since the dialogue took place. He is not feeling the "push back" from the agencies that public involvement is no longer important. On the contrary, there will be 4 meetings on RBES and that is more than he would have expected in the past.

- Greg stated that he did not receive a response to the letter he wrote at the Board meeting requesting a clearer definition of DOE's public involvement commitment. Greg does not believe that DOE values the public as they are not laying out timelines or giving the public the opportunity to give input. With the ecological risk assessment he would like to see the timeline for public involvement and the opportunities for public input.
- Norma Jean Germond agreed with Greg and stated that she is concerned that the feeling she got from Roy Schepens, DOE-ORP, is that public involvement is of no value to him and that it could go away and he would not be concerned. Overall, she felt that the presentation was good, but that it was just being graciously tolerated.
- Jim Trombold agreed with Greg and stated that he feels that the presentation got the message in front of the agencies and that they get the idea. He would like to see the chair talk one-on-one with each new manager to make sure they are familiar with the history of the Board and Board products. Todd Martin pointed out the difficulty isn't the managers not understanding the function of the Board, but that the department heads are not utilizing their public involvement personnel.
- Susan Leckband stated that she has been provided with a timeline on the RBES and that she thinks this is something that should be ongoing for each issue that the committee needs to be involved in. The committee should be notified of issues as they become apparent and then given the chance to make recommendations as to where public involvement would be needed, and this should all be an ongoing process.
- Greg pointed out that, while it is important to know what is coming out and respond appropriately, the committee should be wary of falling back into the decide, respond, defend cycle. He also expressed his concern that, while Dennis is saying things are getting better, Norma Jean is saying that DOE-ORP isn't concerned with public involvement. This illustrates a disconnect that should be addressed. Greg proposed drafting a letter with 6 – 10 topics that need discussion and timelines for engagements. The timelines should be more comprehensive than just a chart and should also include the activities that need to happen. A letter should be written requesting a response with information prior to the formulation of a plan. Yvonne pointed out the decision summary is updated monthly and may be a resource to help in determining which topics to prioritize.
- Todd suggested asking the agencies to add a side note to the monthly decision summary that addresses what they are going to do and when. It was agreed that Todd will write a letter requesting details of the public involvement plan for each item on the monthly decision summary.
- Leon Swenson felt it was good that the committee was given the chance to speak with the managers, but he felt the presentation was simply being tolerated. He suggested

there may be a better response if the other agencies would reinforce the importance of public involvement.

- Susan Leckband commented that the committee must ensure they are being very specific about their priorities. It may help to provide a letter illustrating what the committee wants to see done after such a fruitful discussion.

Handouts

- Cleaning Up Hanford Public Forum flier.
 - Hanford Site Public Involvement Activities, September 2003 – June 2004, Public Involvement and Communication Committee, November 5, 2003.
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Attendees

HAB Members and Alternates

Greg deBruler	Bill Kinsella	Leon Swenson
Norm Dyer	Susan Leckband	Jim Trombold
Norma Jean Germond	Todd Martin	Charlie Weems
Susan Hughes	Wanda Munn	Amber Waldref

Others

Yvonne Sherman, DOE-RL	MaryAnne Wuennecke, Ecology	Nancy B. Myers, BHI
Mike Thompson, DOE-RL	Dennis Faulk, EPA	Bryan Kidder, CH2MHill
Erik Olds, DOE-ORP		
		Stacey Howery, EnviroIssues
		Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues